



Setting District Policies

Module IX

What you will learn in this module

- Why establish district policies.
- Suggested areas where policies may be needed.
- How to organize district policies.
- 10 Steps for determining need, developing and implementing policy.

What are policies?

- Guidelines that regulate organizational action.
- Control the conduct of people and activities.
- Ensure a safe organized, teambuilding, empowering, nondiscriminatory work place.

Why establish district policies?

- District employees and supervisors need to establish and know district policies for a variety of reasons:
 - Employees and supervisors need to know district policies for consistent implementation.
 - The district manager needs to know how much can be spent on equipment repair without board approval.
 - District employees work with minimal supervision and guidance.

10 Steps for determining need, developing and implementing policy

1. A policy may be needed if:
 - a. Actions of an employee indicate confusion
 - b. Suitable ways are needed to handle a situation
 - c. Protect the district legally
 - d. Keep the district in compliance with government policies and laws
 - e. Establish consistent work standards, rules and regulations
 - f. Provide consistent and fair treatment for employees

Cont.

10 Steps for determining need, developing and implementing policy

2. Articulate the goal of the policy
3. Gather information
4. Develop and write the policy
5. Review the policy
6. Obtain management support for the policy
7. Obtain legal review of the policy
8. Implement the policy
9. Decide how you will communicate the policy
in the future
10. Interpret and integrate the policy

Suggested areas where district policies may be needed:

- ✓ District office hours.
- ✓ Financial management (Example: who is authorized to spend district funds and any limits on spending).
- ✓ Office policies (who has keys, who is responsible for locking the building, etc.)
- ✓ Equipment policies (Example: equipment can not be used by employees or supervisors for personal use, e.g. computers or ATV).
- ✓ Other areas where policies are needed to help carry out the day-to-day district activities.
- ✓ Personnel policies

Personnel Policies

- Numerous personnel management problems can be avoided if each district establishes written personnel policies.
- Once written, these policies should be provided to all employees.

Personnel Policies (cont.)

- Basic personnel policy items:
 - Employment terms and conditions.
 - Compensation.
 - Employee relations.
 - Performance appraisals.
 - Employee training.
 - Employee services.

How to organize district policies

- Consider establishing a policy binder.
- Whenever a policy is established in a board meeting it should be recorded in the minutes and placed in the binder.

Policy Review

- Policies should be reviewed annually.
- Consider placing an item on the a board meeting agenda to discuss and establish district policies.
- Consider appointing a district employee or supervisor to draft a policy for the boards adoption to save time a a board meeting.

Review Questions

1. One very important reason district should establish policy for employees is they work with minimal supervision and guidance. True or False?
2. Some suggested areas where district policy should be established are:
 - a. District office hours.
 - b. Financial management.
 - c. Equipment policies.
 - d. All of the above.

Review Questions (cont.)

3. Many personnel management problems can be avoided if each district establishes written personnel policies. True or false?
4. Whenever a policy is established in a board meeting it should be recorded in the minutes and placed in the policy binder. True or False?

Answers to Review Questions

1. One very important reason districts should establish policy for employees is they work with minimal supervision and guidance. True or False? *True*
2. Some suggested areas where district policy should be established are:
 - a. District office hours.
 - b. Financial management.
 - c. Equipment policies.
 - d. All of the above.

d. All of the above

Answers to Review Questions (cont.)

3. Many personnel management problems can be avoided if each district establishes written personnel policies. True or False?

True

4. Whenever a policy is established in a board meeting it should be recorded in the minutes and placed in the policy binder. True or False?

True

Summary

Conservation district policies provide guidance and rules for district supervisors and employees in carrying out the day-to-day district business. Clear policies will help your business identify and prevent potential risks to your employees and ensure that you comply with the law. Create a culture where issues are dealt with fairly and consistently.

Resources Available

- **Resources**
 - Conservation District Handbook
- **Where to find**
 - Located in each district office